

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. This is abuse of power, plain and simple, and skewing of the "news". As I understand it there is supposed to be time offered for rebuttal or opposing views.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter. It's even more important that viewers and listeners be TOLD that a piece is being aired by requirement of corporate owners, and that it may or may not be biased. Since that is unlikely to happen I propose that Sinclair be required either to air an opposing or balancing item of equal length, with equal advance publicity.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.